

Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug

PARISH MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2012/JANUARY 2013



Diocese of Connor - Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug



WHO'S WHO IN OUR PARISH

CLERGY

Rector

Canon S G E Lloyd, B.A.
St Patrick's Rectory
102 Galgorm Road (Tel 2565 2253)



Curate Assistants

The Revd. Brian Lacey
50 Castle Street (Tel 2564 7040 or 075 1429 2107)
Email brianlacey1978@hotmail.com

The Revd. Iain Jamieson
38 Ballee Road East (Tel 2564 7049)
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LAY READER

Mr J Perry, 261a Galgorm Road, Ballymena.

YOUTH WORKERS

Lucy McLaughlin
3 The Commons, Broughshane
Tel 2586 1524
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Alan Ross
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PARISH OFFICE

St Patrick's Hall - Tel 2563 0741 - e-mail - kilconriola@care4free.net OR ballymena@connor.anglican.org

Web Site - ballymena.connor.anglican.org

Open - Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Mrs Lorraine McBride

CHURCH WARDENS

St Patrick's	Rector's	Mrs Carol Sloan
	People's	Mrs Stephanie Johnston
Ballyclug	Rector's	Mrs Mary Galbraith
	People's	Mr Jackie Greer
St Columba's	Rector's	Mr Harry Johnston
	People's	Mr John Mawhinney
Glebe Wardens	Rector's	Mr Ian Semple
	People's	Mr Peter Chestnutt

SELECT VESTRY

Clergy, Church Wardens, Glebe Wardens and:

Honorary Secretary: Mr A Marrs 32 Granville Drive, Ballymena

Honorary Treasurer: Mrs M Caulfield 3 Hope Street, Ballymena

Mr Alan Adair, Mr St Clair Beattie, Mr Barry Duke, Mr Dessie Dunlop, Mrs Liz Hughes, Mr Jim Lynch, Mr Alex McKay, Mrs Adelaide Nimick, Mrs Sadie Peachey, Mr Alan Ross.

Sextons	St Patrick's	Mr John Linton
	St Columba's	Miss Margaret Mawhinney

Organists	St Patrick's	Dr Jonathan Drennan
	St Columba's	Mrs Sandra Montgomery

THE RECTOR WRITES



The Rector Writes

When you read this those of us who have been in Nepal will be home but I am composing this in Kathmandu. Ian McKay and myself have not long returned from a 6 day trek in the Annapurna area. It was quite demanding - there was little level walking and a great deal of climbing up or down hills. And in Nepal those hills easily rise to 10,000 feet. We had a guide but no porter so carrying quite heavy loads made the going more difficult. Still we enjoyed the experience - we had some great views of some of the Himalayan Peaks. We also appreciated the wooded areas and the waterfalls. Each night we stayed in a trekking lodge and met up with a host of other trekkers.



Our main work here was a project in the Balkhu slum by the Bagmati river. As a parish we have been supporting nutrition work in the slum. While we had visited the slum on our last 2 visits, this year we were invited to undertake a project in the small school in the slum. Cheryl Sinclair had worked with Pastor Daniel to set up the project and she paved the way before we arrived. She undertook some work in the Sunday School and then the 3 of us worked in the classrooms for a few days. We were basically doing art and craft work with the children - ages about 4 - 7. We found it a humbling and valuable experience - the children were very responsive and acquitted themselves very well given their background and environment. We were well received and I trust the children may have appreciated our little efforts.

The teachers have little training for their work and so as a follow up we are intending to sponsor 2 teachers to undertake a particular course of

training. We are paying ECEC - Early Childhood Educational Centre, an organisation which we visited, to provide this training. It was also my privilege to preach at Pastor Daniel's church in the slum last Sunday. The service started some time between 10 - 10.30 am and lasted till 12.45 pm - evidently a little shorter than usual because my talk was not the normal length that the pastor gives them. There was very lively singing led by a group of young people in bright robes and several people came forward to lead parts of the service. We were made very welcome and after the worship many asked us to offer a ministry of prayer for healing.

While in Nepal we also have renewed some contacts and made new ones. We attended worship at Sundar Dhoka and also saw the new church building which is well on in its construction. We have been meeting with our friend Ady and assisting him in his application for a visa to come to Northern Ireland and spend time in our parish. The visa process has been a frustrating one but all the information has now gone to Delhi for a decision. Cheryl especially spent some time with the Dunamis Organisation which provides training for those interested in ministry in the church. The students are all very enthusiastic and are enlivened by the Holy Spirit. We also came across a former student who is now playing a leading role in his church - the Himalayan Crusade Pentecostal Church - and he was very keen to engage with us and to pray with us. Our trekking guide Gita was a young man who had become a Christian and although his English was not very good he was more than keen to talk about Holy Jesus.

Many of the Nepali's that we have encountered would formerly have been Hindus but now have found the Christian Gospel and it really is good news to them. In many ways it has lit their lives up and it shows. As we engage with the Christian church here in Nepal it does seem that their faith really makes a difference to them and their joy is apparent.

Yes their circumstances are different to ours and there are concerns about a multiplicity of churches popping up. It is, however, heartening to see the vitality of the church and the fervent faith of so many. We have much to learn from Christians here in Nepal, although with our long history of Christianity in Ireland maybe they too have something to learn from our experience.

Having hired bicycles we have also had opportunity to get out into the countryside and to witness the everyday life of the people. The fields are mainly brown with most of the rice cut although there are still some

fields bright yellow with rape. The high hills encompass the Kathmandu Valley and against the bright blue sky are the misty white shapes of the mighty Himalayas. A woman leads a cow along the road, 2 women carry enormous loads of straw enveloping them, another mother is massaging her baby. People wash and shower by the roadside, school children shout out the greeting 'Nameste', men are sitting around playing a board game and yes some men are clearing the rivulet that runs alongside the road.

The sights, the sounds, the smells are all special and there is thankfulness at being admitted into the ordinary lives of these people - so open and welcoming so that in some sense we feel at home.

Sailing along in bright sunshine and shirtsleeves but soon it will be back to winter weather and to Christmas. We have witnessed the birthing of Christianity in many people's lives and how it has brought light into their lives. We will soon be singing carols and among other ones we will sing requesting, "Be born in us today." Surely many of us can recognise the need for the Christ to come to life in us, for us to see in a fresh way the good news that we have in Christ and to appreciate how the Christian way of looking at life can really light up our lives and give such a positive direction to those lives. Thanks be to God for the gift of the Christ child - yes the light of the world, providing us with a wonderful hope in which we take on the rest of our lives.

Stuart Lloyd.

POSTSCRIPT - Since returning we have heard that Ady has gained a visa and will be coming to us.





Parish News

FIRST AID COURSE

A six hour First Aid Course for Youth Workers will run on:-

- **Monday 4th February 2013**
from 6 - 9 pm and
- **Monday 11th February 2013**
from 6 - 9 pm

Those in need of a Refresher Course will be notified individually but, if anyone else is interested please inform **Oliver Reid** on **2565 5439**.

CHURCH ENVELOPES

The Christian Responsibility (CRG) envelopes and the Renovation envelopes for 2013 have been distributed. For those living in outlying areas your envelopes may still be at the back of the churches. If you are due to get envelopes and have not yet received them please notify the office.

Some people leave it to the end of the year to make up their monies. If this applies in your case we would appreciate it if you would do so as soon as possible.

We very much value the ongoing giving of so many people. Despite the tight economic times parishioners have risen to the challenge. As well as the good response to the Restoration Appeal the general giving, while slightly down on last year, has been at a reasonable level. Mind you covering increasing expenses is still difficult but the faithfulness of many in giving is good to report.

THE BALLYMENA FOODBANK

The Ballymena Foodbank is now collecting food for its opening next year. If this is to be a success people will need to donate food *regularly*, this has to be an on-going project. The list of foods needed is printed below, and is in the office and is going to be put up as a notice. Food can be left at the back of church or handed in. If anyone has access to a supermarket shopping trolley we could use as a collection point or ideas how we can get one (legally!)- can they let me know? There will of course be other ways to get involved in this scheme. More details on those later. I hope

that some of you may feel moved to contribute in some way and I have been encouraged by interest shown so far.

- Milk (UHT or powdered)
- Sugar (500 g)
- Fruit juice (carton)
- Biscuits or snack bar
- Pasta sauces
- Cereals
- Sponge pudding (tinned)
- Tomatoes (tinned)
- Rice/pasta
- Rice pudding (tinned)
- Tinned fruit
- Jam
- Tea bags/instant coffee
- Tinned meat/fish
- Soup
- Instant mash potato

Iain

THEOLOGY GROUP

The Theology Group will meet on **Thursday 3rd January**. We will be examining how the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark and Luke were written, how they relate to each other, and how they differ from each other. The following meeting will be on **Thursday 7th February**, at which we will study the Gospel according to John. This group is intended to provide an introduction to Biblical studies and Christian theology, and as such it is open to everyone. Each meeting commences at 7.45 pm and lasts until 9.30 pm. We

meet in the Parish Halls at St Patrick's. Refreshments are served for those who come early, and there is a short break halfway through. You are warmly invited.

Brian

ST COLUMBA'S DINNER

A very sincere thank you to all those who supported our Hallowe'en Dinner on Saturday, 27th October.

Thanks also to everyone who assisted in various ways and to those who entertained us and helped make the evening such a success. We raised £900 which will help with the cost of our projector and screen etc.

Liz and Les

SHOE BOX APPEAL

140 shoe boxes received from the parish. Thanks to all.

'Liz and Les would like to say a big thank you to everyone who made a donation for the covered shoe boxes. They raised £190 which will go towards the Parish Christmas Fair to help with the cost of repairs to the tower etc.'

Jean Kennedy

FORTHCOMING EVENT

Put the date **Saturday 9th March** into your diary when there will be a Barn Dance in St Patrick's.

Strictly Come Dancing skills definitely not required! Even if you are tone deaf with no sense of rhythm and two left feet you can really join in and enjoy it. It's the most friendly exercise you can do in a church hall. Special prize for anyone who doesn't smile at least once the whole evening.

RESTORATION APPEAL

It has been heartening to continue to get contributions to this appeal through the Harvest Envelope. At the time of writing we have been able to lodge £31,407 in our bank from the appeal. As many of you will have seen scaffolding now embraces St Patrick's and the restoration work has just started. Very many thanks to everyone who has helped sponsor a brick/s. Further fund raising initiatives are being organised.

BISHOPS' APPEAL

We are only too well aware of the many struggling because of the economic downturn. However, those who suffer most are those at the bottom of the ladder - the poor of our world. In the light of this we trust there will be a good response to the Annual Bishops' Appeal - the Church of Ireland's World Aid and Development Programme - envelopes for this and information leaflets will be available on the first three Sundays in December.

ADVENT REFLECTIONS

As in previous years a series of Advent Reflections has been organised by the Ballymena Inter-church Members Forum. This interchurch initiative takes the form of a short service followed by refreshments each Thursday in Advent from 12.30 - 1.15 pm. We hosted the first one in St Patrick's - **Thursday 6th December** will be in All Saints, **Thursday 13th** in First Ballymena and **Thursday 20th** in the Methodist Church.

BALLYCLUG

As is our custom we will have a mid week service on the Wednesday evenings of Advent in Ballyclug at 8 pm - **Wednesday 5th, 12th and 19th**. We will use the service of Compline and will be looking at 3 aspects of prayer - Thanksgiving, Confession and Intercession.

FAMILY SERVICE

In December in St Patrick's this will take the form of the Sunday School Nativity Service on Sunday **23rd December at 11.30 am**. There will be **NO** Family Service on the usual third Sunday 16th at 10.15 am.

OFFICE CLOSURE

The office will be closed after Christmas until **Monday 14th January**.

COFFEE MORNING AND CAKE SALE

**St Patrick's Church Hall
Castle Street
Ballymena**

**SATURDAY 19th JANUARY
10 AM - 12 NOON**

**Come along and join us and
Sing along with the girls of the GFS
For morning coffee/tea, scones and tray bakes**



Proceeds to St Patrick's Parish Church Appeal



Honorary Secretary's Notes

Well, the long looked for work at Castle Street has finally started; the long wait to begin having been caused (inevitably) by waiting for the government, in the shape of the Environment Agency, to get all its ducks in a row and give their formal permission to the contractor to move onto the site. This formal permission was necessary as part of the conditions of the funding assistance being given by the N.I. E.A., so we can't really grumble about it too much.

However, during the wait the situation in the tower continued to deteriorate and the recent very wet weather has seen water running down the south wall inside the Ringing Room and going down into the organ loft. What the result of that will finally be remains to be seen, by the time you are reading this it should be known how much damage (if any) might have been caused to the organ itself.



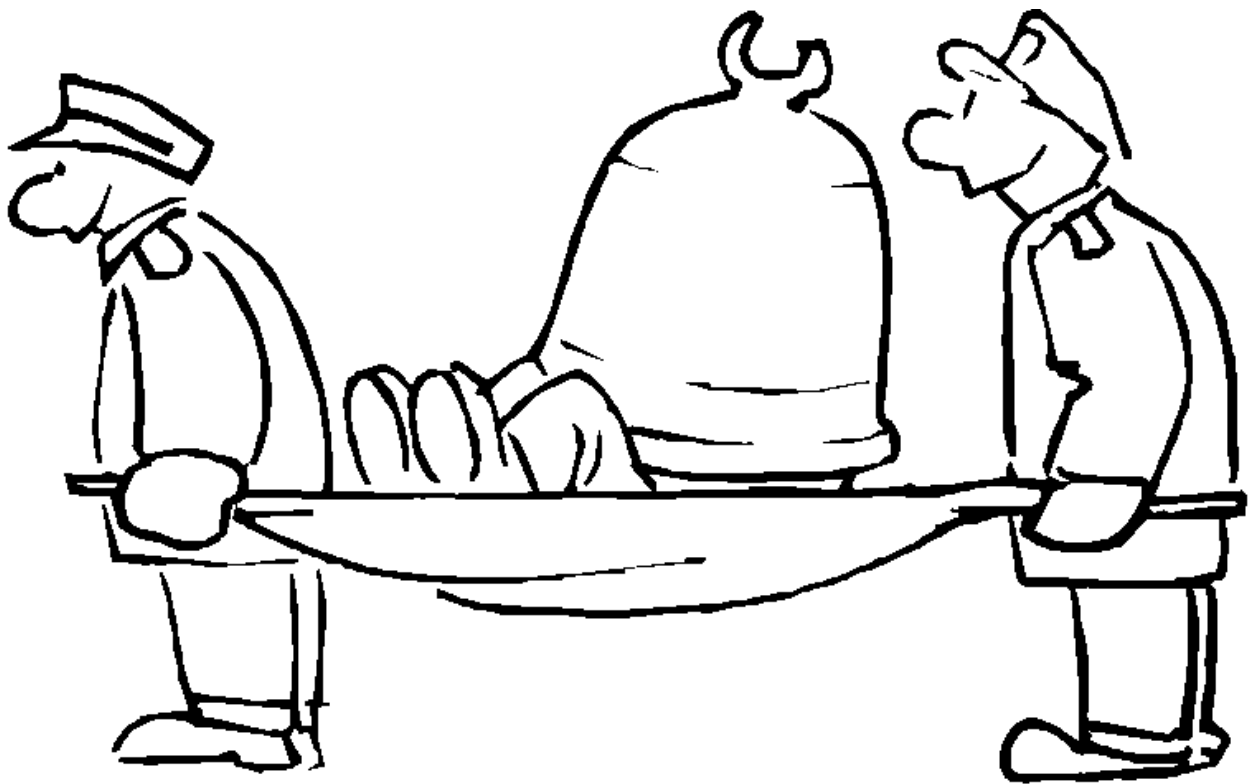
Fund Raising for the building work continues of course, the Christmas Fair will be just past as you read this but there are plans for further events in the New Year which we'll all enjoy supporting, and many thanks to everyone involved in the hours of organising and creating all of these events. The requests to several external bodies have borne fruit too, in the form of a grant for £3000.00 from The Esme Mitchell Trust. The credit for this is due to the work being put in by Colin

Watt, and at the time of writing he is still waiting for the outcome of several other such applications.

The repairs to the tower at Ballyclug are also in hand, weather and daylight permitting they may even have been completed by now, and it has also become apparent that there will need to be attention given to the East Window there too, which is letting in rain in several parts. That's just a reminder to us all that we can't afford to devote our entire attention to St Patrick's in Castle Street, time and weather are still acting on all the buildings we look after in the Parish.

It seems unbelievable that we have come to this time of year again, 2012 doesn't seem to have lasted long, but I'll sign off these ramblings by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Alastair



Plans to replace the Church Bell came too late for the Church Warden



YOUTH CLUB

The Youth Club has been busy on a Saturday night. The shoe boxes we made up have been sent away. We have been enjoying ice cream sundaes and giving money in aid of the repairs to the church. So far we have raised £100. We are all looking forward to Christmas and especially the Christmas party on **Saturday 15th December**, 7 - 8 pm for primary school children and 8 - 10 pm for secondary school pupils. This will be the last night of the Youth Club for 2012 - we will start again on **Saturday 12th January 2013**.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

In Sunday school we have been learning the Lord's Prayer and we will be saying it and singing it in church. Some Sunday school teachers went to a children's conference called 'Building Blocks' in Wellington Church where they participated in workshops. The speaker was Bob Hartman who is a Christian author. What they learnt will be applied to children's ministry throughout the next year. The Sunday school teachers hope to enjoy a Christmas dinner together in early December and we are all practicing for the Carol Service on Sunday 23rd December at 11.30 am. The Sunday School have been raising money for the church repairs by building churches out of 50 pence pieces - so far we have collected £100. No Family Service 16th December - Sunday School instead. This will be the last day of Sunday school. We restart on **Sunday 6th January 2013**.

ENERGISE

Energise the rural deanery meeting for young people will meet in Ahoghill on **Sunday 16th December** and in St Patrick's in January.

CHRISTIAN AID FAMILY APPEAL

Sunday School teachers and children will receive envelopes in which they can give a donation towards the family appeal - instead of the giving and receiving of presents these can be given at the Carol Service on 23rd December.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Please can you bring presents, unwrapped, to Sunday School over the next two weeks. These will be given to the Church Army Christmas Appeal and then distributed to needy children.

Happy Christmas to all the young people and leaders of the parish and a peaceful New Year for 2013.

Lucy and Alan

CHRISTMAS PARTY

DJ - DARREN

For all the youth in the parish
including uniformed organisations
Sunday School and Youth Club

SATURDAY 15th DECEMBER
ST PATRICK'S CHURCH HALL

Primary School Age
7 to 8 pm
Secondary School Age
8 to 10 pm

Hope to see you there!

CHRISTMAS

St Patrick's, Ballymena

Sunday 23rd December 2012

8.15 am Holy Communion

11.30 am Sunday School

Nativity Service

6.30 pm Festival of Nine

Lessons and Carols
by Candlelight

24th December - Christmas Eve

11.30 pm Holy Communion 1

Christmas Day

8.15 am Holy Communion 1

10.30 am Family Communion 2

Sunday 30th December 2012

8.15 am Holy Communion 1

11.30 am Service of Carols and
Reflections

6.30 pm Baptism and Carols

31st December 2012

11.15 pm Watchnight Service



SERVICES

St Columba's, Dunclog

Sunday 23rd December 2012

11.30 am Morning Prayer

7.00 pm Service of Nine
Lessons and Carols
by Candlelight
followed
by refreshments

Christmas Day

10.30 am Family Communion 2

Sunday 30th December 2012

11.30 am Carols and
Reflections

St Patrick's, Ballyclug

Sunday 23rd December 2012

10.00 am Service of Lessons
and Carols

Christmas Day

10.00 am Holy Communion 1

Sunday 30th December 2012

10.00 am Carols and
Reflections





Around the Parish

SQUIRRELS

The Squirrels enjoyed their spooky hallowe'en party at the end of October. They had lots of treats and games and of course they had the opportunity to forget about uniforms and dress up for the evening. The costumes were all so scary that poor Mr Squirrel was very frightened!



Squirrels enjoying their Hallowe'en Party

Now that December is here the Squirrels are looking forward to Christmas and Santa. We will be having our Christmas party on **Wednesday 19th December**, when hopefully we will be having a very special visitor. The Squirrels will then take a break for a couple of weeks. We will return again on **Wednesday 9th January**. Paul, Ann and Mr Squirrel would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Squirrels, families and friends a very Happy Christmas.

Paul and Ann



BEAVERS

The first session of the Beaver year is drawing to a close and it has been an action-packed and fun-

filled time for our boys. However, to maintain our present level of activity, some extra help would really be appreciated. If you would like to join us as an Assistant Leader, just come along some Monday evening to St Columba's at 6.30 pm and we will be very glad to see you. Meetings last for one hour.

Lise McCullagh, Beaver Leader

CHURCH LADS' BRIGADE

Thanks to all parents and friends for their support at the Enrolment Service. New recruits into the Martins - Corry Black, Finn Sloan, Bobby McIlwaine, Carson Hume. Moving up to Y Team - James Johnston, Mason Hume, Rico Kirk, Wyatt Lorimer, Makenzie McIlwaine. Seniors - Luke Cunningham, Tria Hume, Cameron Neilly.



Friday 14th December is the Brigade Christmas Party night - usual times, no uniform required. Our annual jumble sale will be held on **Friday 1st March 2013** - we hope that this will give everyone more time for a good spring clean and to clear out all the clutter around the house. More details in the February magazine.

All the leaders would like to thank you for your continued support throughout the year and wish all your families a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year. Brigade will recommence on **Friday 4th January 2013**.

Alan Ross (2589 2740)

MOTHERS AND TODDLERS



In November we had our usual fun activities of crafts, toys, singing and healthy snacks. It's great to see so many parents, carers and children each week enjoying themselves. We enjoyed a craft morning with Sure Start when the children made a lovely collage; we look forward to their return in the New Year with Action Songs. We send our best wishes to June McMaster,

Oliver Reid and Evonne Stinson. Also a special thank you to the ladies in the kitchen and the gentlemen who are braving the cold and wet winter mornings helping with car parking. It is much appreciated. If there are any gentlemen who are free on a Tuesday morning between 9

and 10.30 and willing to help with the car parking, please give Dorothy a ring, we would be very grateful for your help.

Our Christmas Party will be held on **11th December** and this will be our last day until the New Year - **8th January 2013**, once again we say thank you to Les Hughes for agreeing to do a very important job that day.

We would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Rota for December/January:-

DATE	NAME	FUNCTION
4 December	Rosemary Stacey, Sandra McKay and Mary Cochrane	Tea
	Bee Robinson	Welcoming
	Alex McKay	Car Park
11 December	Evonne Stinson, Eleanor Burnett, Martha Caulfield and Rosalie Grainger	Tea
	Vera Owens	Welcoming
	Davy Nelson	Car Park
8 January	Rosemary Stacey, Sandra McKay and Mary Cochrane	Tea
	Bee Robinson	Welcoming
	Alex McKay	Car Park
15 January	Evonne Stinson, Eleanor Burnett, Martha Caulfield and Rosalie Grainger	Tea
	Vera Owens	Welcoming
	Davy Nelson	Car Park
22 January	Martha Rainey, Dorothy Hegan and Isabel Halliday	Tea
	Anne Fisher	Welcoming
	Trevor Halliday	Car Park

DATE	NAME	FUNCTION
27 January	Ruth Murray, Isabell Adair, Nell McIlwee and Karin Agnew	Tea
	Ann Harrison	Welcoming
	Davy Nelson	Car Park

Our sincere thanks to you all.

Dorothy (2589 2740), Anna, Anne and Liz

CUBS

Wow what a start to the new Cubbing year, two and half months into the new term and already success has been seen. A trip out to Cullybackey



for the District quiz resulted in a 2nd Place for the team - Ellie, Ben, James and John - congratulations to all of them. Next it was the turn of the Cubs District football where Josh, Ben, Faye, Adam and Luke came away as District Champions, congratulations to all the team.



*2nd Place in the District Quiz
(John, Ben, James and Ellie)*

As we are working on the 'Global' and 'Community Challenge badges' as well as 'My Faith' and 'World Faith' activity badges trips away to St Patrick's Parish Church (thank you to Brian), All Saints Parish Church and to the Indian Culture Centre in Belfast were arranged. The Cubs got to see how very similar all 3 religions are and got to see behind

the scenes in each of the three places of worship.

Now, if all that is not exhausting enough we managed to fit in our Promise renewal at the Youth Service in St Columba's and to take part in The Royal British Legion Annual Remembrance Parade in Ballymena.

Now that we are back in the hall again work has started on the Nativity play and the finishing touches to the badge work.

Ah, its raining outside and nearly a river running down the street, that reminds me that Thomas, Jake, John S and John C all swam up from the beavers and also 'newbie' Faye, were all invested into the Cubs, glad to have you all in our pack.

Now if you have a son, daughter or grandchild who would like to get involved in learning about cubs and what we do call down to the hall at St

Columba's on a Thursday 6.45 pm to 8.15 pm, but it may be wise to give Heather a call on 079 8071 5721 to check that we are in the hall.

Roy aka Chil, ACSL



Champions 2012 Cubs District Football

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
www.themothersunion.org

MOTHERS' UNION

- **Wednesday 12th December at 8.00 pm 'Get Together with photographs' - seasonal supper by Ann Adams**

and Jean Kennedy. A list will be available for the Annual Dinner at this meeting or you can contact Jean on 2563 0671.

- **Wednesday 9th January 2013 at 7.30 pm - Annual Dinner in Minor Hall.**

Jean Kennedy

FLOWER GROUP

Flower Group will decorate the church on **Tuesday 18th December from 10.30 am.** Donations of greenery holly, ivy etc would be much appreciated. As we are a small group we would be grateful for any extra help. Everyone welcome - morning coffee provided!



The Flower Group would like to thank all for their generous donations to the Flower List. 2013 list will be available at the end of December 2012.

CHOIR TRIP TO LONDON



On Friday 2nd November members of the choir travelled from Belfast International Airport to South End Airport in London for a weekend break. During the afternoon on Friday we had plenty of time to shop, visit museums or go on an open top bus tour, and in the evening we all went for dinner in Covent Garden where we reminisced about earlier days in St Patrick's. The Caldwell family who joined us, Avril travelled from Edinburgh and Audrey from Cambridge, added a lot of happy memories.

Again on Saturday we went our own way and in the evening it was SHOW time for everyone to see Chariots of Fire, which was a lively and energetic performance.

Sunday after lunch we made our way to Westminster Abbey for a service of Matins - we were escorted to the visitors pews, alongside the Abbey Choir pews. As we sat taking in the magnificence of this huge, stately Abbey, steeped in history, the silence was broken by the fabulous Abbey choir, consisting of over 20 boys and 12 men, singing in a heavenly introit, from what seemed miles away in the south end of the Abbey.

The whole Anglican Matins service being familiar to us was very moving, full of reverence, the fabulous anthem and canticles were sung by the

Abbey choir only, however, St Patrick's Choir joined in enthusiastically with the congregational hymns.

The Abbey experience left us all with an overwhelming feeling of timeless space in this house of God, a little taste and sound of heaven, an oasis in this vast cosmopolitan capital city where English is sometimes spoken and where magnificent architecture, power and wealth live uncomfortably alongside homeless people, who sleep rough and beg on the streets.

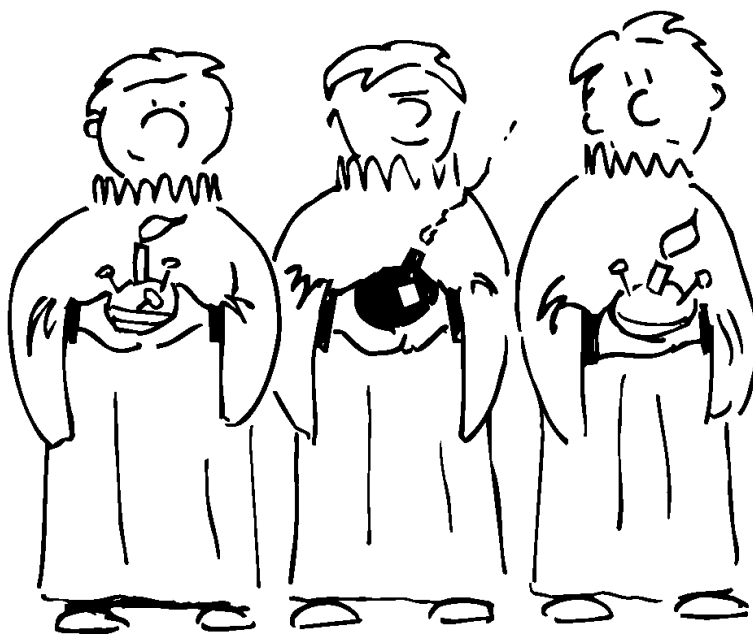
We must thank Moyna for her excellent organisational and negotiation skills - for arranging hotel, flights, train tickets, maps of London, maps of the tube system, places to see and for undertaking all the treasury duties, in short, if it needed to be fixed Moyna fixed it.

Thanks also to Jonathan (Dr Drennan) whose enthusiasm and idea it was for the choir to go to London to listen and learn from one of the best Anglican choirs in the world. While the choir were of course keen to attend the 'improvement and learning experience', the fun, friendship, fellowship and real craic we enjoyed with good friends will be remembered for a long time.

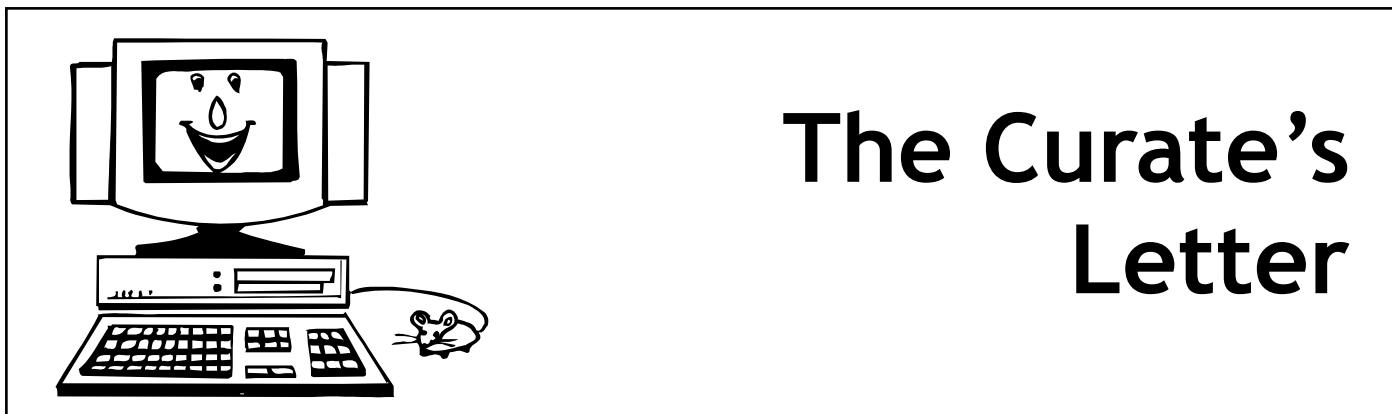
One question remains JONATHAN - WHERE TO NEXT?

Ella Duddy

P.S. If you enjoy singing to the Glory of God and enjoy having fun you will be made very welcome - join us please.



***The Christingle Service
went with a bang***



The Curate's Letter

One of the things which is so different about our parish in Ballymena, is the variety of things happening, and the number of people involved in our parish life. Sadly all too many churches are now buildings open for one service on a Sunday and shut up like mausoleums for the days in between (giving out the message - See us! Not much happening here! If you're looking for Life move on!). I was trying to explain to a friend of mine the number of different regular events in our parish, but I lost count after eight, and I know there are many more than that. Of course none of these things would be possible without all the people who give their time and work to the church, not just as a one off but week in and week out. I will mention Sandra Montgomery in this regard, as someone whose long term commitment in many ways has been a great asset to us. There are of course many others, please recognize yourselves as I use Sandra to stand for you all. I thank God in my own prayers for all of you for maintaining our healthy and energetic church community.

One of the characteristics of a healthy church community is that it is not *inward-looking* but looks out to those in need outside. Three people who have definitely not been inward-looking recently are the Rector, Ian and Cheryl, who are all recently back from Nepal, a country so exotic sounding it can hardly be imagined by us stay-at-homes. I am told the Rector and Ian liked the mountains best, but that for Cheryl it just had to be the trucks and the traffic in Kathmandu. Maybe Cheryl has some truck photos on her phone for those of us who find it difficult to really *visualize* a Nepalese truck? Welcome home to you all.

Following on from my message in the last letter neither the Archbishop of Canterbury nor the Archbishop of Armagh replied to my messages about taking communion more than once a day, maybe because they were both on their way out of office, but I will keep trying. Please see the notice elsewhere in the magazine about the Ballymena Foodbank - I hope

some of you will get involved. Of course having mentioned being inward-looking there are two seasons of the Church Year when reflection and stillness are encouraged, Advent and Lent. We are about to enter the rather mysterious season of Advent, which might be seen as the *pregnancy* of the church, as the people of God quietly awaits the birth of Christ, the God-man, the Redeemer, the bridge between us and God. Everyone is encouraged to attend our Advent worship and reflections.

Blessings.

Iain James

Seven Towers Male Voice Choir

In Concert

St Patrick's Church Hall

Castle Street

Ballymena

Friday 1st February @ 7.30pm

Admission £8



Mice, mice, mice!

As you might be aware, it's rare for a day to pass without someone asking about my cats, but not since I worked in a pet shop fifteen years ago have I heard so many people talking about mice! Mice, mice, mice! Thankfully this is neither a reference to my house or to one of the churches. It all comes down to that old expression "When the cat's away, the mice will play" which is - as you might imagine - a reference to the Rector's trip away to Nepal! The implication being: what shenanigans will the curates get up to?!

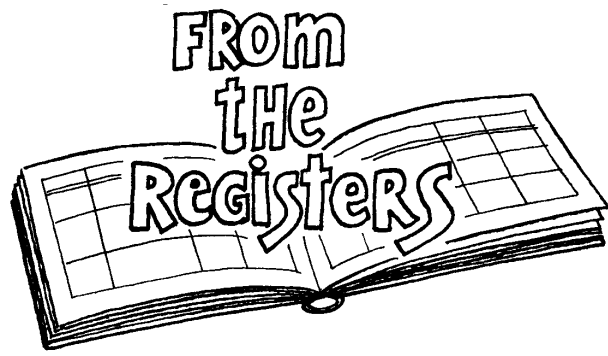


Well I can assure you that the Rector's absence didn't make too much of a difference to the routine of the clergy. Yes it was sad not to have him around to chat with, but the worship continued to take place, the discipleship groups met as usual, the meetings were held, the sick were visited. It was business as usual! Of course it would be easy to think that with the boss away, the curates and staff might just take a bit of a holiday. Sure what he doesn't know won't harm him! But as relaxing as that would have been, what has prevented us most from adopting that attitude was the sure and certain knowledge of the Rector's return. The boss would come back, and no doubt he will ask each of us to give an account of our activities over the last few weeks. You could nearly write a sermon about that. Indeed it fits very well with Jesus' parable of the master who returned and asked his servants to explain what they had or had not been doing for him during his absence. Those servants who did their job were rewarded. Those who did not ... well, perhaps I'll leave it to you to read the gospels and find out. Let's just say they'll not be needing their thermal underwear where they were sent!

There is an important lesson in this for all of us in the Church who try to be disciples of Jesus. Whilst often it seems that he is absent, the clear message of Scripture is that Jesus will return, and each of us will have to give an account of what bad things we have done, and even what good things we failed to do. The boss - the heavenly boss - will come back! That shouldn't scare us, but it should serve to unnerve us a little bit - at least enough to make us anxious to please God. So whilst at Christmas we celebrate the first time Jesus came to earth, please reflect during the next couple of months about Jesus' return. What have you done that you need to make amends for? What have you failed to do, that you need to start doing? Jesus is coming. Be ready!

Have a very merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Brian



CHRISTIAN BURIAL



11th Nov. Alexander John McIlvenna 49 Rathmore Heights,
Ballymena

Alexander John McIlvenna

Alexander was the much loved baby son of David and Lisa, and a long-awaited younger brother to Sophie and Katie. Born on the 6th November he lived for only a few short and precious days. During that time he was baptised in the Royal Victoria Hospital by Canon Ken Ruddock. He was buried at the Kilconriola graveyard on the 11th November. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family as they cope with their tragic loss.





OUR ACTIVITIES

SAINT PATRICK'S

	Day	Time	Venue
Bellringers	Friday	7.30 pm	Tower
Bible Fellowship	Tuesday	8.00 pm	Choir Vestry
Church Choir	Thursday	7.30 pm	Choir Vestry
Church Lads' Brigade			
YBC	Friday	6.45 pm	Parochial Hall
JTC	Friday	6.45 pm	Parochial Hall
CLB	Friday	8.00 pm	Parochial Hall
Girls' Friendly Society	Tuesday	7.15 pm	Minor Hall
Healer Prayer Group	Tuesday	7.15 pm	Church Vestry
Indoor Bowling Club	Monday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
	Thursday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
Mothers and Toddlers	Tuesday	10.00 am	Parochial Hall
Mothers' Union	2nd Wed.	8.00 pm	Minor Hall
Still Active Club	3rd Wed.	2.00 pm	Minor Hall
Youth Club	Saturday	8.00 pm	Parochial Hall
Junior Youth Club	Saturday	7.00 pm	Parochial Hall
Young Adult Fellowship	2nd Sunday	7.30 pm	Jubilee Room
Youth Fellowship	3rd Sunday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
Badminton	Wednesday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
Theology Group	1st Thurs.	7.45 pm	Jubilee Room
Sewing Group	Thursday	10.00 am	Parochial Hall

SAINT COLUMBA'S

	Day	Time	Contact
Beavers	Monday	6.30 pm	Mrs L McCullagh
Ladies' Circle	4th Monday	8.00 pm	Mrs L Beatty
Brownies	Tuesday	6.30 pm	Mrs S Foster
Guides	Tuesday	6.30 pm	Mrs K Black
Squirrels	Wednesday	6.30 pm	Mr P Houston
Christian Living Group	3rd Wed.	7.30 pm	Rev B Lacey
Cubs	Thursday	6.45 pm	Miss H Hughes
Choir	Sunday	10.15 am	Mrs S Montgomery
Rainbows	Friday	6.30 pm	Miss E Peachey
Scouts	Friday	7.45 pm	Mr K Hughes



OUR WORSHIP

ST PATRICK'S PARISH CHURCH

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.15 am		<i>Holy Communion</i>
10.15 am	<i>3rd Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Family Service</i>
11.30 am		<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	<i>1st Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Parish Communion</i>
6.30 pm		<i>Evening Prayer</i>
	<i>4th Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Living Faith Service</i>

EVERY WEDNESDAY

10.30 am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
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ST PATRICK'S, BALLYCLUG

SUNDAY SERVICES

10.00 am		<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	<i>4th Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Holy Communion</i>

ST COLUMBA'S, DUNCLUG

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.30 am	<i>1st Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Holy Communion</i>
11.30 am		<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	<i>2nd Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Family Service</i>
	<i>3rd Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Family Communion</i>

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

ST PATRICK'S

11.30 am	<i>Church</i>	<i>Leaders - Mrs L McLaughlin and Mr A Ross</i>
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ST COLUMBA'S

11.30 am	<i>Church</i>	<i>Superintendent - Mrs S Foster</i>
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HOLY BAPTISM

At Sunday services by arrangement